



How can my lifestyle affect my health?

What is the evidence that blood pressure and other long term conditions are caused by lifestyle?

Are you interested in what causes raised blood pressure, and why so many people have hypertension?

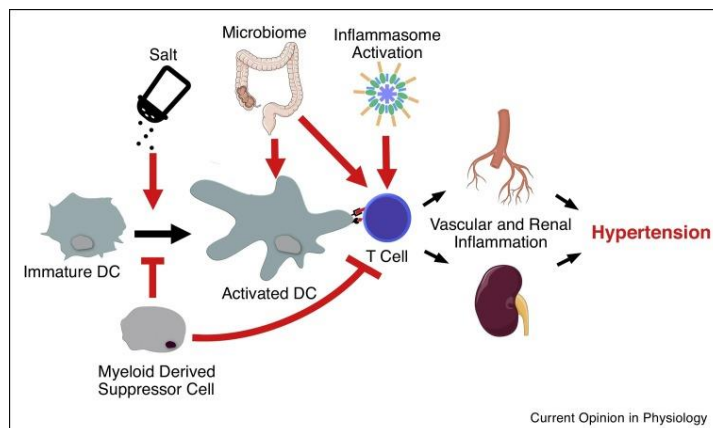
This chapter looks at some of the scientific research about what causes high blood pressure. If you find it difficult to understand, that just makes you the same as me and many doctors and health professionals! However, you don't need to understand it all before you take action- read on, find out how altering your lifestyle can make a difference.

Introduction

For many years, health care professionals were taught that the cause of **hypertension**, high blood pressure, was not known.

But as chronic, low-grade inflammation has been shown to be at the root of so many long-term conditions, including fatty liver, Type 2 Diabetes, heart disease and many cancers, I found myself digging into the research to find out whether **hypertension** might have the same root cause.

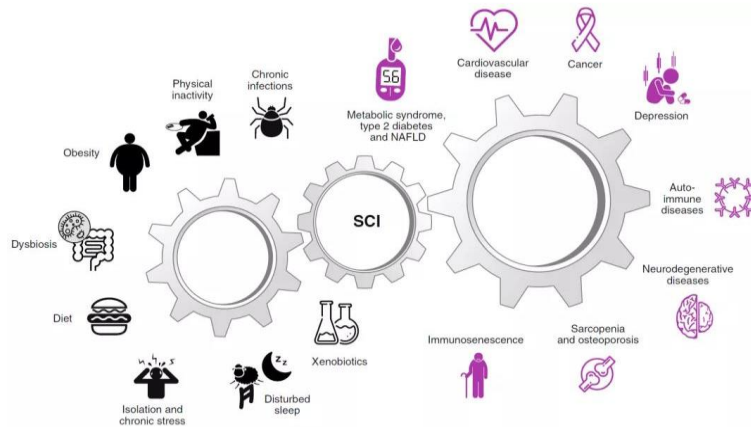
And yes, there is increasing evidence over the past 10 years that **Hypertension** is part of the same maladaptive process. And with **Hypertension** affecting **more than a third of the adult population**, it would seem that the development of hypertension can almost be seen as 'the gateway to long-term conditions'.



[The role of inflammation in hypertension: novel concepts - PMC \(nih.gov\)](#)

So many different systems in the body- the gut microbiome, inflammation in blood vessels and kidneys and activated immune cells all play a role in hypertension. That sounds like a lot of bad news.

And this diagram from the journal Nature, we see how our western lifestyle- including physical inactivity, what we eat, daily stress and isolation- all contributes to driving systemic chronic inflammation (SCI).



Chronic inflammation in the etiology of disease across the life span

Nature 5th Dec 2019

However, the good news is that tackling lifestyle- eating better, sleeping more, reducing stress, being more physically active- can reduce blood pressure by as much and more than the medications that are so often prescribed.



Go ahead. Start today. Decide on the changes you will make, the new habits that you want to form.